

Focus On...

eChalk Email

Introduction

Email can be very useful in a school setting. For instance, instead of writing out a memo and delivering it to everyone's mailbox in the main office, you can simply send an electronic note via email from your desk. And you can even get a confirmation back that the message has been read!

Using email with students teaches best practices with this form of communication, is an efficient way to reach all the kids in a class or grade, promotes one on one communication between teacher and student and can be used as a tool to improve students' written communication.

This chapter is designed to walk you through the basics of using eChalk email. You will learn how to read and write email messages and also how to organize your email to ensure that it becomes a time-saving and easy mode of communication for you.

Before you know it, you will be emailing:

- Parents about student performance
- Students about work they missed due to an absence
- Other teachers about great new lesson plan ideas

Happy emailing!

In This Guide

- Read and write emails using eChalk
- Create and organize email folders
- Use the Address Book and Find Members tools
- Customize your personal email account settings

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Using My Email

After logging into eChalk, click the **My Email** button on the left toolbar. Your email **Inbox** will display. You may already have a message in your **Inbox**.

In the **My Email** area (Fig. 4.1), you will see the following options:



Figure 4.1

- **Inbox** – Use your Inbox to read, delete, or manage mail you have received.
- **Write Mail** – Click on Write Mail to write and send email, and to view your school's eChalk email security policy.
- **Sent Mail** – Look in your Sent Mail to view copies of messages sent from your account.
- **Folders** – Use the Folders tab to view and manage your personal email storage folders.
- **Search** – Use the Search tab to find emails from a specific person or by using keywords.
- **Address Book** – Use your Address Book to store email addresses or groups of email addresses.
- **Options** – Click on Options to configure your email, including: customizing the way you send and store email, managing junk mail, configuring auto-delete settings, adding an electronic signature, forwarding email to another address, and creating personal email filters.

Using My Email

My Email Inbox

Like memos you pick up from the main office or letters you receive at home, email messages come into a mailbox called an inbox. After logging into eChalk, your email **Inbox** will display.

Just like the outside of an envelope, you can tell a lot about an email message before opening it, including who the message was sent from, when it was sent, if there is an attached file, and what it is about.

From your email inbox you may use the command buttons to easily delete messages; mark emails as junk, read, or unread; or block addresses from sending you email.

The **Space Used** information at the bottom of your **Inbox** allows you to monitor how much email space you have used and to view your total available email storage.

To quickly view your additional email folders, use the **View Another Folder** list at the top of your **Inbox**.

The other **My Email** tools in the left navigation bar help you write, organize, search, and control your email. But before you look at these more advanced toolbar options, let's take a closer look at the basics of reading and writing email messages.

To open and read an email message, click the **Subject** link for that email (**Fig.4.2**).



Figure 4.2

Using My Email

Reading Email

After clicking the **Subject** link from the **Inbox**, the body of the email message will display. (Fig. 4.3)

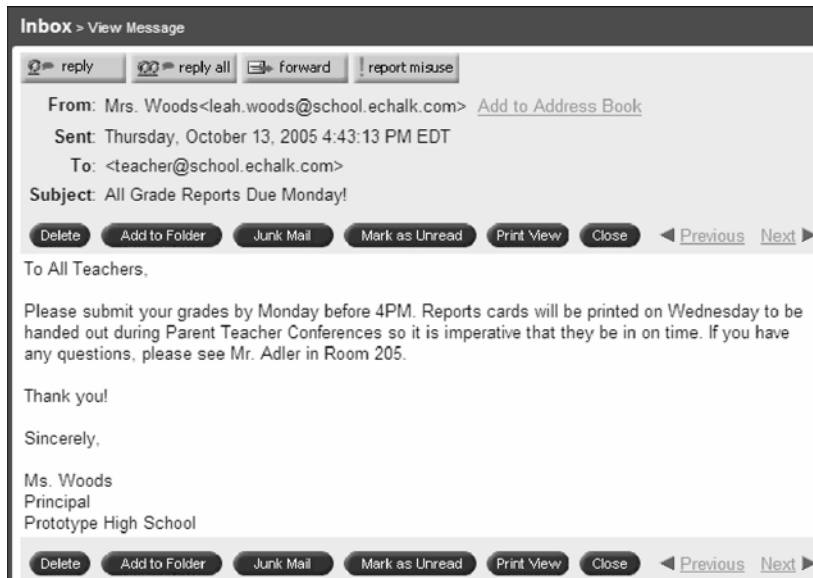


Figure 4.3

At the top of every email there is a header that summarizes the information you learned in the Inbox, including a **To** field which tells you who else received the message.

Scroll through and read the message. When you are done reading, you can click the **Close** button at the top or bottom of the screen to return to the Inbox or use one of the response options that display across the top of the **View Message** page:



The **Reply** button allows you to reply directly to the person who sent you the email.



The **Reply All** button allows you to reply to both the person who sent you the email and any other recipients of the email.



The **Forward** button allows you to send a copy of the email to a new recipient.



The **Report Misuse** button allows users to report an inappropriate email to the eChalk Site Manager.



Note: When you reply to an email, any attachments that were included with the original email will not be attached on the reply. When you forward an email, the original attachments are included.

Various links and command buttons on the **View Message** page enable you to delete the message, add the sender to your address book, block future emails from the sender, move the message to your junk mail folder, or mark the message as unread.

Using My Email

Writing Email

The **Write Mail** page (Fig. 4.4) will display when you click any of the response options (**Reply**, **Reply All**, **Forward**) from the body of an email message, or when you click the **Write Mail** button under **My Email** in the left toolbar.

The first step to writing your email message is to address it. If you are using one of the response options, the address field will already be filled in for you. Alternately, you may use your **Address Book** or the **Find Members** utility to easily send emails to individuals in your eChalk community rather than typing their email address manually.



Power Tip: If your school/district colleagues have activated their eChalk accounts, you can simply type in their first and last names (John Hall, Mary Hanson) to send them an email. eChalk will complete their email addresses for you!

Notice that there are three different boxes in which to write email addresses.

- **To:** is used to address the primary recipient(s).
- **Cc:** (Carbon copy) is used when the email is not directly addressed to the person, but would still be of interest to him or her. For instance, if you are emailing the history department about a meeting, you might want to Cc the principal. The principal might not be directly involved in the meeting, but he or she may want to know about it.
- **Bcc:** (Blind carbon copy) is used to include someone in an email without letting others know they are receiving it. The person (or persons) to whom you've addressed the email will not be able to see that you've sent a copy of the email to a Bcc: recipient, thus the "blind" reference. It could be useful to include the department chair as a Bcc when emailing a parent about his or her child.

Figure 4.4

After filling in the address fields and indicating a subject for your message, click inside the message box and begin to write your email.



Note: If you are replying to a message, the subject of the old message will be automatically filled in, prefaced by a *Re:* (meaning “regarding”). The body of the original message will also be included in the message box. Click in the space above the original message, and begin typing your note.

When you are done writing your email message, click the **Send** button.



Note: By default a copy of the message will be saved in your **Sent Mail** folder. See **Email Options** for additional details.

Using My Email

Email Address Conventions

Email addresses can look like any of the following:

kthompson@school.org

harrison345@company.com

blackcat@hotmail.com

But all email addresses have a standard format. For example:

katherine.thomas@school.echalk.com

(pronounced “Katherine dot Thomas at school dot eChalk dot com”)

Mailbox Name: Usually some form of the person’s name, but sometimes a nickname.

Domain Name: The organization that is hosting the email account. The domain name usually refers to either the person’s employer, or any of a number of large email providers such as Hotmail or AOL.

Using My Email

Using Find Members

eChalk provides an easy to use tool that helps you quickly find contact information for members of your school and district community.

When writing emails, click on the [Find Members](#) link on the [Write Mail](#) page to search for other eChalk users.

The [Find Members](#) tool allows you to search for users within your school or across schools in your district, for specific types of users, or for users with specific names, job positions, or grade levels.

► **To send email using the Find Members tool:**

- 1 Click the [Find Members](#) link on the [Write Mail](#) screen. The [Find Members](#) search screen will display.
- 2 Select the site(s) you wish to search in the [Search Within](#) section.



Note: This option appears only if your site is part of an eChalk district.

- 3 Select the type of user in the [Search For](#) column.
- 4 If you know specific information about the member, enter or select additional criteria in the [Search Information](#) column.
- 5 Click the [Find Now](#) button.
- 6 On the [Search Results](#) page, select the members you want to email.
 - Check the boxes in front of the names in the appropriate columns: [To](#), [Cc](#), or [Bcc](#).
 - Click the [OK](#) button.



Note: Some members displaying in the [Search Results](#) page will not have check boxes in front of their names for the [To](#), [Cc](#), [Bcc](#) sending options. Only users who have active eChalk accounts will be able to receive mail, so only these active users will display sending options.

- 7 Finish composing your email message on the [Write Mail](#) page.



Power Tip: If you're unable to find the individual you're looking for, try entering a partial name or click the [Used Advanced Search](#) link to choose additional search criteria. Also note that you do not have to select or enter content in every field listed.

Using My Email

Email Attachments

An attachment is a file or document that is included in an email (Fig. 4.5). For instance, if Barry Smith is emailing you about the updated soccer schedule, he might include the schedule (a Microsoft Word Document) as an attachment so that you can preview and approve it.

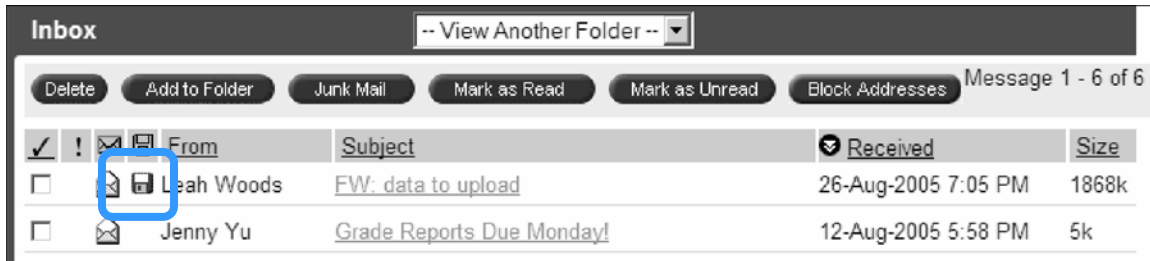


Figure 4.5

The floppy disk icon indicates that there is an attachment included in the message.

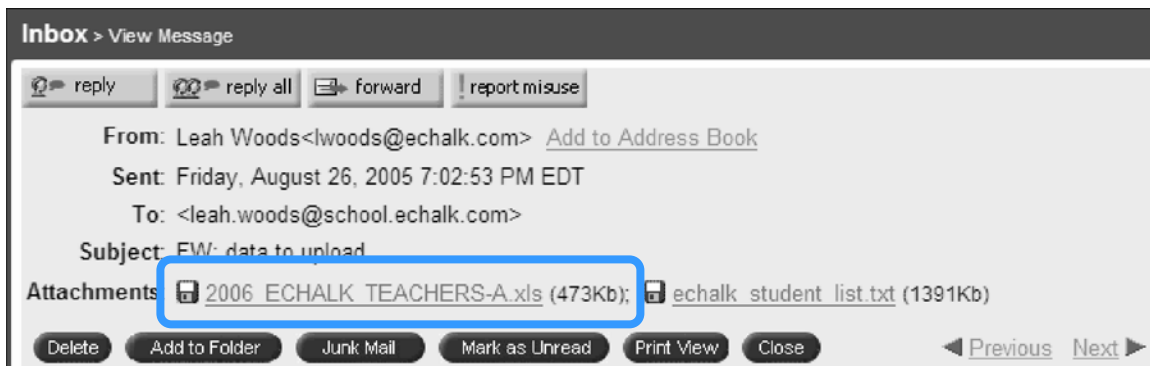


Figure 4.6

An attachment will appear as a link in the **View Message** screen (Fig. 4.6).

The settings on your computer will determine what happens when you click on the attachment link. The file may automatically open up within your browser or a pop-up window may ask you if you would like to open up the file or save it to a disk or your local computer. If you save the file to your computer, it is important that you remember where in your file directory you have saved it (e.g. your My Documents folder), so that it will be easy for you to retrieve when you are ready.



If you want to send a file as an attachment, you can do so by using the **Attach Files** button in the **Write Mail** screen.

► **To attach a file to an email:**

- 1 Click the **Attach Files** button in the **Write Mail** screen.
- 2 Click the **Browse** button and locate the file on your computer.
- 3 Select the file and click the **Open** button.
- 4 Click the **Attach** button. Your file name will display in the **Attachments** box.
- 5 Repeat steps 2-4 until all files you would like to attach are uploaded.
- 6 Click **OK** to return to the **Write Mail** screen. Your attachments will appear in the message header under the **Subject** field.

Using My Email

Using Email Folders

eChalk enables you to store and manage email by using custom folders. Moving email out of the **Inbox** and into folders helps organize and save messages. If you only receive one or two emails a week, it may not be difficult to manage email. But, if you find that you receive many emails that you would like to keep for future reference, setting up folders will save you valuable time searching through pages and pages of messages.

Your eChalk email account includes five standard email folders: **Inbox**, **Deleted Mail**, **Drafts**, **Junk Mail**, and **Sent Mail** (Fig. 4.7).

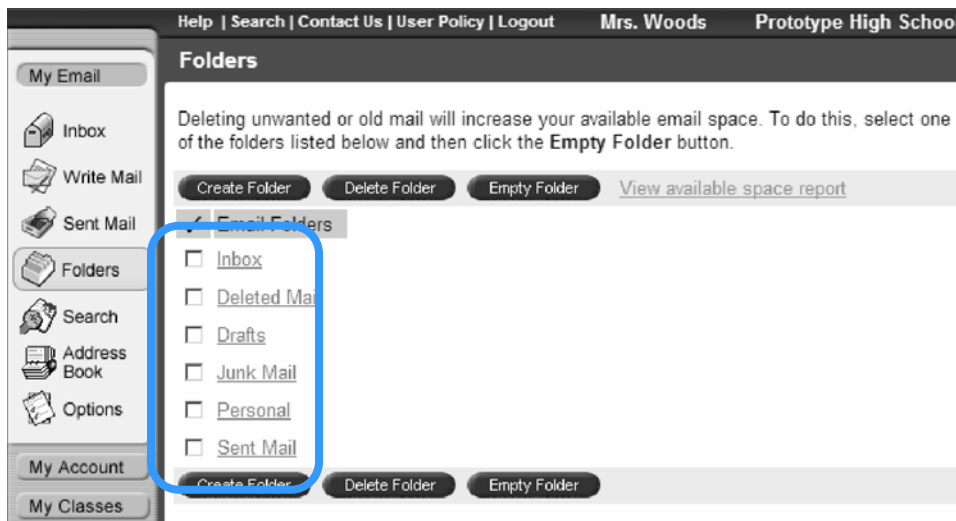


Figure 4.7

To view your email folders:

- Click on the **Folders** tab in your **My Email** area, or
- Use the **View Another Folder** control at the top of your **Inbox** page.

The **Folders** page allows you to create and delete folders and to quickly delete all email messages from one or more folders.



Power Tip: To quickly navigate between your email folders, use the **View Another Folder** control at the top of your Inbox.

You may also use the **View Available Space Report** link on the **Folders** page to see the total number of emails and the total space used in each folder.

► **To create a custom folder:**

- 1 Click on the **Folders** button in your **My Email** area.
- 2 Click the **Create Folder** button.
- 3 Enter the name for your new folder.
- 4 Click **OK**.

► **To delete a custom folder:**

- 1 Click on the **Folders** button in your **My Email** area.
- 2 Click the checkbox to the left of the folder(s) you want to delete.
- 3 Click the **Delete Folder** button.
- 4 Click **OK** to delete the folder and all email messages in that folder.



Note: You cannot restore a folder or any email messages it contained once it is deleted.



Note: It is not possible to delete a standard folder (e.g. **Inbox**, **Sent Mail**, **Drafts**, **Deleted Mail**).

► **To delete all messages within one or more folders:**

- 1 Click on the **Folders** button in your **My Email** area.
- 2 Click the checkbox to the left of the folder(s) you want to delete.
- 3 Click the **Empty Folder** button.
- 4 Click **OK**.

► **To move messages to another folder:**

- 1 Click on the **Folders** button in your **My Email** area.
- 2 Click on the name of the folder containing the messages you want to move.
- 3 Check the box next to the email(s) that you want to move. Notice that you can check more than one email at a time or select all emails by checking the **Select All** checkbox at the bottom of the page.
- 4 Click the **Add to Folder** button.
- 5 Select the folder you want to move the messages into using the drop-down menu.
- 6 Click **OK**.

Tips for Using Email Folders

- Create separate folders to store email for different classes. For example, Math-Period 4 or Concert Choir.
- Create different folders to store emails from other staff members or school administrators. For example, Teachers or School Business.
- Use different folders for various projects, topics, or other activities. For example, Egypt Project, Spring Musical, Chess Club, 5th Grade Curriculum Team.
- Avoid hitting your limit by periodically emptying folders. On the **Folders** page, check the boxes next to one or more folders and click the **Empty Folder** button to quickly delete all email messages in selected folders.

Using My Email

Searching Email

You may find that you need to refer back to information in an email you sent or received, but you just can't remember which email you need. The **Search** feature in your **My Email** area enables you to search all of the emails in your email folders using a keyword search. You may search for either a keyword or phrase.

► To search for an email:

- 1 Click the **My Email** button on the side toolbar.
- 2 Click the **Search** button on the side toolbar.
- 3 If you remember who sent the email to you, type the name in the **From** box (partial names are acceptable).
- 4 If you are looking for an email you sent to someone, type their name in the **Sent To** box (partial names are acceptable).
- 5 If you remember text that appeared in the email, select **Text** from the drop-down menu and enter your search terms.
- 6 If you want to narrow your search, choose one of these options:
 - Select a folder from the **In Folder** drop-down menu (the default is **All Folders**).
 - Select a smaller area of text to search. For example, choose to search just the **Subject**, **Body**, **Cc** or **Bcc** fields.
 - Select a date range (the default is all emails) using the **From:** drop down menus at the bottom of the page.
- 7 Click **Search Email** to begin the search. A list of all emails containing your keywords will appear.



Note: You can perform a search using any of the above fields. You don't need to enter information into all of the fields to complete the search. However, you are more likely to get accurate results when you use multiple fields.

Using Your Email Address Book

Your **Address Book** is a great time saver. You can store email addresses or groups of email addresses (Fig.4.8) so preparing an email message takes only a few mouse clicks. You won't have to memorize or retype someone's email address once you've saved it in your **Address Book**.

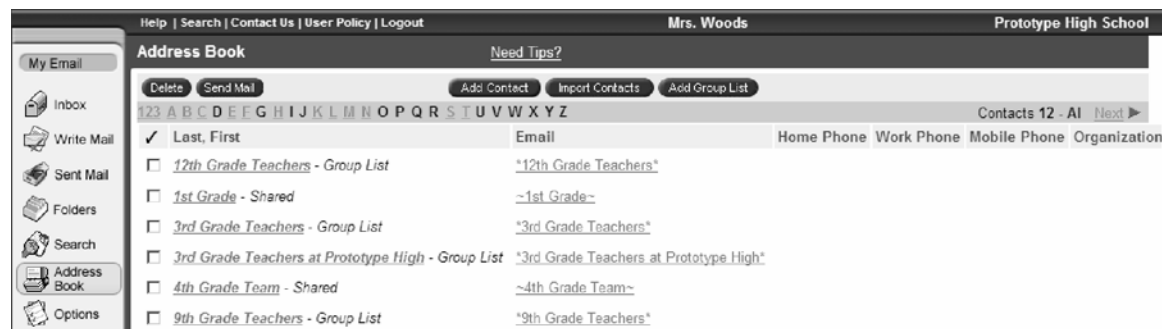


Figure 4.8

► To add a contact to your address book:

- 1 Click the **My Email** button on the side toolbar.
- 2 Click the **Address Book** button on the side toolbar.
- 3 Click the **Add Contact** button. The add contact page appears.
- 4 Click in each field to fill in the form. Certain fields (such as phone numbers) have drop-down menus associated with them.
- 5 As a shortcut, you need only fill in the email address and first or last name, but you may find it useful to have all the contact's information stored in one place.
- 6 Scroll down and click the **Save** button when you're done. The **Address Book** appears.
- 7 The new member's name and email address appear on the **Address Book** page.

Once you've added a contact to your address book, you may:

- Click a name to edit the contact information, or
- Click an email address to send an email to the contact.



Power Tip: An easy way to add a new contact to your address book is from an incoming email. Simply click on the **Add to Address Book** button at the top of the **View Message** screen.



Note: You can remove members from your address book by checking the box in front of the member's name and clicking **Delete**.

Using Your Email Address Book

Finding Contacts in the Address book

The list of contacts is alphabetized in your address book. To find contacts or to move around the address book, use the **Alphabet Bar** at the top of the page. Click the first letter of your contact's last name to open your address book to the correct page.

Occasionally, you may have a contact name starting with a number instead of a letter. For example, you might create a group and name it "5th Grade History Class". Any contact name that starts with a number is listed before the alphabetized contacts. Click the **123** link on the alphabet bar to view these contacts.

You may use the **Next** link located in the upper right corner of your address book to flip through pages of contacts.

Using Your Email Address Book

Sending Email to an Individual

Once you've added an email address to the Address Book, you'll find it very easy to send an email.

► **To send an email using the Address Book:**

- 1 Click the **My Email** button on the side toolbar.
- 2 Click the **Address Book** button on the side toolbar. The **Address Book** opens.
- 3 Click the first letter of the person's last name on the **Alphabet Bar**.
- 4 Once you've found the correct name, click the email address link. A blank email opens with the person's name filled in automatically in the **To:** box.
- 5 Write your message. Click the **Send** button when done.

Using Your Email Address Book

Creating a Group List

By grouping your email addresses, you can add many addresses to an email message at once. For example, if you're a teacher, you might want to create a group of teachers that teach a particular subject. Then you can send all of them an email simply by selecting the group.

► **To add a group to your address book:**

- 1 Click the **My Email** button on the side toolbar.
- 2 Click the **Address Book** button on the side toolbar.
- 3 Click the **Add Group List** button.
- 4 The **Add Group List** page appears.
- 5 Type a name for the group in the **Group Name** box and enter a description for the list (optional).
- 6 Click **Next**.
- 7 Select contacts to add to your group list by using any of the following options:
 - A. Click the **Add Contacts Manually** button if you want to type or copy and paste a list of contacts into your Group List or if you're adding someone from outside of your school or district.
 - To add contacts manually, you can either enter the contact's name (First Last), or the contact's email address in the **Add Contacts** box.



Note: If you would like to use eChalk's autocomplete feature, you may enter partial first or last names in the **Add Contacts** box. In order to do this if you are part of an eChalk district, click the **Select Sites...** link and choose the eChalk schools in your district to which the contacts belong.



Power Tip: Add non-eChalk users to a group list by using the **Add Contacts Manually** feature and entering their email address.

- Click **OK**.

- B. Click the **Select Contacts** button if you want to add contacts by conducting a search of your school/district directory.

- If you are part of an eChalk district and your contacts are at other sites within your district, click the **Select Sites...** link located at the top of your screen to select the sites to which your contacts belong.
- Click the radio button next to the type of user you would like to add to your group list. You can further refine your search by defining fields in the **Optionally select other criteria** column of the search screen.
- Click **Next**.
- A prompt will display asking: Would you like to add this set of users as a rule to your group?



Note: A rule will set your contact list to all users who fit your selected criteria. For example, if you set your search to **User Type:** Staff, **Position:** Guidance Counselor, all users on your eChalk system with a profile setting of **User Type:** Staff, and **Position:** Guidance Counselor will be added to your group automatically. If an additional Guidance Counselor is added to your school's eChalk system in the future, (s)he will also be automatically added to your group.

- Click **Yes** to create this group list by rule.
- If you decide not to set up a rule for group membership, click **No** and you will be taken to a screen of search results and have the option to manually choose the contacts for your group list. If you choose this option, then you will have to manually adjust your group contacts to add additional users in the future.

C. Click the **Add from Address Book** button if you want to add contacts from your Address Book.

- Select the contacts you would like to add to your group list.
- Click **OK**.

8 Click the **Finish** button to save your group list.



Note: If you want to check whether a contact was added to the group list, select the group list in your address book and click on the **View Email Contacts** link.

Using Your Email Address Book

Addressing an Email to a Group

Once you've created a group of contacts in your **Address Book**, you'll find it very easy to send a group email.

► To send an email using a group list:

- 1 Click the **My Email** button on the side toolbar.
- 2 Click the **Address Book** button on the side toolbar. The **Address Book** opens.
- 3 Click the first letter of the name of the group from the **Alphabet Bar**. For example, if you've named your group "History Class", click H.
- 4 Click the email link for the group. The **Write Mail** screen will display.
- 5 Type your message and click the **Send** button when done.



Note: The group email address will look like the following: *Group Name* or ~Group Name~.

Setting Your Email Options

eChalk provides a variety of tools to allow you to customize the way you send and store email, manage junk mail, auto-delete mail, and manage personal email filters.

► **To edit your personal email options:**

- 1 Click the **My Email** button.
- 2 Click the **Options** button under **My Email**.



IMPORTANT: After making any changes to your personal email options, remember to scroll to the top or bottom of the page and click **Save**!

The Options page is divided into six sections:

- General Options
- Security Settings
- Storage Space
- Message Signature
- Auto Forward/Reply
- Advanced Options


General Options

The general options section (Fig. 4.9) allows you to determine the number of rows displayed in your email folders including your **Inbox** and **Address Book** (i.e. 10 rows, 20 rows, 30 rows, etc.). You can also set the auto refresh rate, sound an alert when you receive a new email, or enable automatic spell checking when you write and send an email.

The screenshot shows the 'Options' page with a 'Save' button at the top. Below it is the 'General Options' section. It includes a text input for 'Display' set to '10' rows in your email folders and Address Book. Below that is a dropdown menu for 'Refresh my Inbox every' set to '1' minutes. There are two checkboxes: 'Sound an alert and pop up a window when a new email message is received.' which is checked, and 'Automatically spell check when sending mail.' which is unchecked.

Figure 4.9

Security Settings

 **Note:** *Security Settings* will only display if advanced filtering has been purchased for your site. Contact eChalk for more information.

Each user will have the ability to configure additional personal spam filter settings. Users can use the **Filter Level** drop down to increase the sensitivity of the filtering software, thereby removing more Spam from their **Inbox**.

Users may also select the **Block images** option from the **Hide images** drop down in order to protect against potential viruses or offensive content in incoming email. If this setting does not display in a user's **Email Options**, the site has been configured to block all images in email.

Storage Space

By using the storage space options (Fig. 4.10) you can decide whether to save or not save deleted messages to the **Deleted Mail** folder, save or not save outgoing messages to the **Sent Mail** folder, and define various auto-delete settings for the **Deleted Mail**, **Sent Mail**, and **Junk Mail** folders.

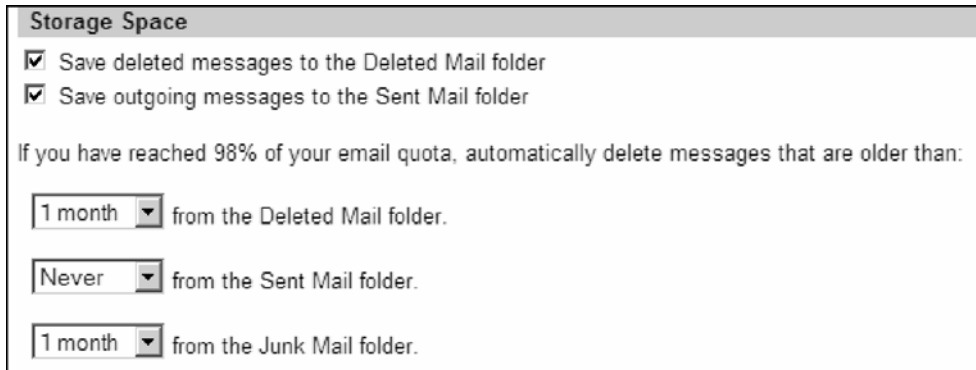



Figure 4.10

 **Power Tip:** Make sure to keep space available in your Inbox. Once the Inbox reaches 100% capacity, all subsequent emails are returned to sender.

Message Signature

It is customary to include a signature at the end of your email. Use the **Message Signature** text box (Fig. 4.11) to create a custom signature to include at the bottom of each email message you send from eChalk. Click the **Always include signature** checkbox to automatically include this signature in your emails.

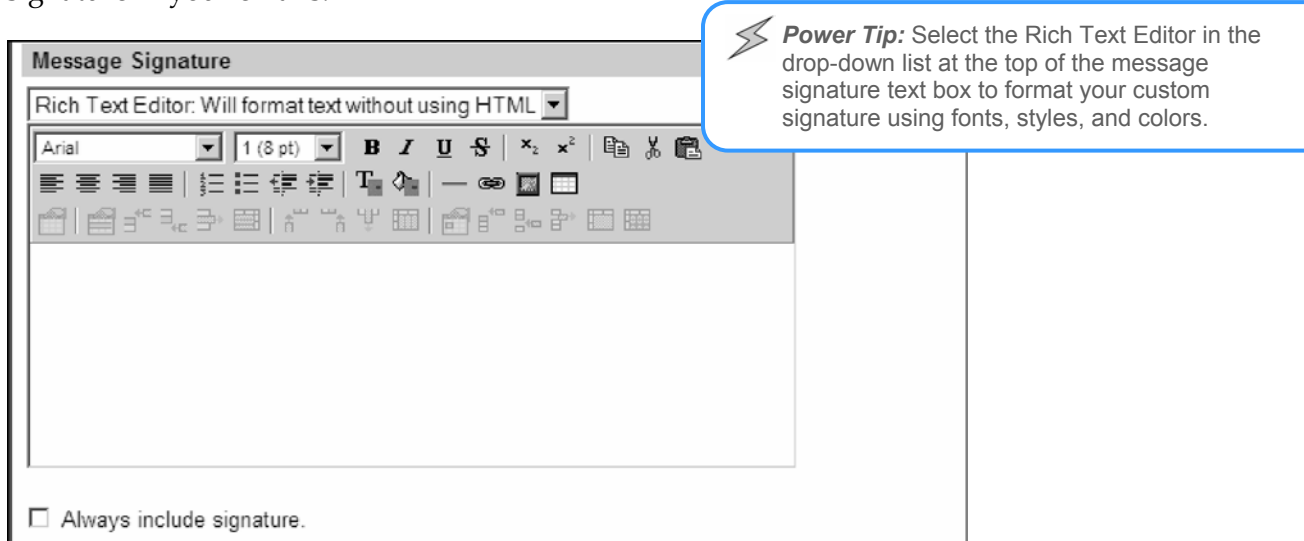


Figure 4.11

Auto Forward/Reply

If you currently use another email address as your primary method of communication, you can forward all of your eChalk email to that address. To forward your email, simply enter a single email address in the **Forward all mail to the following address** text box (Fig. 4.12). By default, eChalk will keep a copy of the email in your eChalk inbox. To forward your email without keeping a copy in your eChalk inbox, simply click on the **Don't leave a copy of the message in my eChalk mailbox** check box.

eChalk also allows you to send an automatic reply message to anyone who sends you an email. This can be helpful during school holidays, vacations, or for times when you may not be able to check your email. You can enter a custom message in the **Auto-reply message** text box and click on the **Reply to all incoming email with the following message** check box (Fig. 4.12).



Note: Don't forget to turn off your auto-reply message when you return to school.



Figure 4.12

Advanced Options

An easy way to help manage and organize your email messages is to define various rules and filters for incoming email. You can add custom filters to file your email in folders according to criteria such as keywords, subject, etc. Click on the [Filters](#) link to create your own custom email rules and filters (Fig. 4.13).

Your eChalk inbox can also pull email from any other POP3 compliant email account. Check with your other email provider to determine whether your other email account is POP3 compliant. If so, you will need the appropriate SMTP server address (e.g. mail.schoolname.com) along with your user name and password for that account.

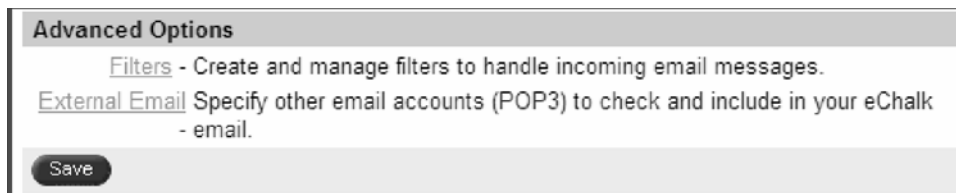


Figure 4.13



Using My Email

Email Troubleshooting/FAQ

Q: Can I download messages from eChalk to my local computer?

A: Yes. Users may configure any POP3 email client, such as Microsoft Outlook, to download and save copies of their eChalk mail to their hard drive. Please contact eChalk Support for detailed instructions.

Q: I accidentally deleted an important email, is there any way to retrieve it?

A: The first step is to check your **Deleted Mail** folder for the message. If the message is not in the **Deleted Mail** folder, then contact eChalk Support. eChalk may restore emails received by users within the last 30 days. However, eChalk will not be able to restore emails that were deleted the same day they were received.

Q: Why am I receiving unsolicited emails? How can I block these emails?

A: While the eChalk system employs several methods to protect you from receiving the bulk of Spam emails, you may still occasionally receive Spam. You may create personal filters to block specific email addresses or emails containing certain keywords by clicking on **My Email** in the left side toolbar and then clicking on **Options > Filtering**.

Q: Can I share a personal group list with another user?

A: Users do not have the option to share personal group lists with other users. If you wish to share an email list with members of a group, we recommend creating a shared email group list. Only users with Site Administrator privileges have the ability to create shared email group lists. Once created, a shared email group list will automatically display in the eChalk address books of all group members. Please contact eChalk Support for detailed instructions.

Q: How can I increase my email storage space?

A: All users have a 25 megabyte default email storage limit which may be increased by the Site Manager for an additional fee. Email storage limits may be increased for all users of a particular user type (i.e. teachers, students, administrators, etc.) as well as for individual users.

Q: A student/faculty received an offensive email. Can eChalk trace where this email message was sent from?

A: Yes, eChalk can trace the origins of an email. However, due to the sensitivity of incidents involving offensive or threatening emails sent to members of a school community, eChalk will only conduct an email investigation pursuant to the written request of a proper authority within the school or district.